Tennessee Instructional Leadership Standards
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All schools need effective instructional leaders who are well prepared and capable of leading the changes in curriculum and instruction that will result in higher levels of learning for all students. Effective instructional leaders create a school culture of high expectations conducive to the success of all students. Effective instructional leaders ensure that school programs, procedures, and practices focus on the learning and achievement of all students and support the social and emotional development necessary for students to attain academic success.

Consistent with best practice, current research and sharpened by the wisdom of experienced educators the Tennessee Instructional Leadership Standards (TILS) identify core performances of effective instructional leaders. The TILS support the continuum of development from aspiring instructional leaders to exemplary instructional leaders committed to continuously improving their practice, contributing to the knowledge base and mentoring new leaders.

Standard A: Continuous Improvement

An effective instructional leader implements a systematic, coherent approach to bring about the continuous growth in the <u>academic achievement</u> of all students.

Indicators:
1. Engages the education <u>stakeholders</u> in developing a school <u>vision</u>, <u>mission</u> and <u>goals</u> that emphasize learning for all students and are consistent with that of the school district.

2. Facilitates the implementation of clear goals, strategies, and timelines to carry out the vision and mission that emphasize learning for all students and keep those goals in the forefront of the school's attention.

3. Creates and sustains an <u>organizational structure</u> that supports school vision, mission, and goals that emphasize learning for all students.

4. Facilitates the development, implementation, evaluation and revision of <u>data</u> informed <u>school-wide improvement plans</u> for the purpose of <u>continuous school improvement</u>.

5. <u>C</u>ollaborates with parents/guardians, community agencies and school system leaders in the implementation of continuous improvement.

6. Communicates and operates from a strong belief that all students can achieve academic success.

Standard B: Culture for Teaching and Learning

An effective instructional leader creates a school <u>culture</u> and <u>climate</u> based on high expectations conducive to the success of all students.

Indicators:
1. Develops and sustains a school culture based on <u>ethics</u>, <u>diversity</u>, <u>equity</u> and collaboration.

2. Advocates, nurtures, and leads a culture conducive to student learning.

3. Develops and sustains a safe, secure and <u>disciplined learning environment</u>.

4. Models and communicates to staff, students, and parents self-discipline and engagement in lifelong learning.

5. Facilitates and sustains a culture that protects and maximizes learning time.

6. Develops a <u>leadership team</u> designed to share responsibilities and ownership to meet student learning goals.

7. Demonstrates an understanding of <u>change processes</u> and the ability to lead the implementation of productive changes in the school.

8. Leads the <u>school community</u> in building relationships that result in a <u>productive learning environment</u>.

9. Encourages and leads challenging, <u>research based</u> changes.

10. Establishes and cultivates strong, supportive family connections.

11. Recognizes and celebrates school accomplishments and addresses failures.

12. Establishes effective lines of communication with teachers, parents, students and stakeholders.

13. Recruits, hires, and retains teachers whose values and instructional frameworks align with the school's mission.

Standard C: Instructional Leadership and Assessment

An effective instructional leader facilitates the use of instructional practices that are based on assessment data and continually improve student learning.

Indicators:
1. Leads a systematic process of student assessment and <u>program evaluation</u> using <u>qualitative</u> and <u>quantitative data</u>.

2. Leads the <u>professional learning community</u> in analyzing and improving curriculum and instruction.

3. Ensures access to a <u>rigorous curriculum</u> and the supports necessary for all students to meet high expectations.

4. Recognizes <u>literacy</u> and <u>numeracy</u> are essential for learning and ensures they are embedded in all subject areas.

5. Uses research based <u>best practice</u> in the development, design, monitoring and implementation of curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

6. Monitors and evaluates the school's curricular program for rigor.

7. Provides teachers and parents with assessment results on a regular basis.

8. Develops and implements a system to regularly communicate <u>student academic progress</u> and assessment results to parents, students, and teachers.

Standard D: Professional Growth

An effective instructional leader improves student learning and achievement by developing and sustaining <u>high quality professional development</u>.

Indicators:
1. Systematically <u>supervises</u> and <u>evaluates</u> faculty and staff.

2. Promotes, facilitates and <u>evaluates</u> professional development.

3. Models <u>continuous learning</u> and engages in <u>personal professional development</u>.

4. Provides leadership opportunities for the professional learning community and <u>mentors</u> aspiring leaders.

5. Works in collaboration with the school community to align high quality professional development with the school's improvement plan to impact student learning.

6. Provides faculty and staff with the <u>resources</u> necessary for the successful execution of their jobs.

Standard E: Management of the <u>School</u>

An effective instructional leader facilitates learning and teaching through the effective use of resources.

Indicators:
1. Establishes a set of <u>standard operating procedures</u> and <u>routines</u> that are understood and followed by all staff.

2. Focuses daily operation on the academic achievement of all students.

3. Garners and employs resources to achieve the school's mission.

4. Prepares and regularly monitors an annual operational budget that aligns with the school's improvement plan.

5. Mobilizes <u>community resources</u> to support the school's mission.

6. Identifies potential problems and is <u>strategic</u> in planning <u>proactive responses</u>.

7. Implements a shared understanding of resource management based upon equity, integrity, fairness, and ethical conduct.

8. Develops a comprehensive strategy for positive community and media relations.

Standard F: Ethics

An effective instructional leader facilitates continuous improvement in student achievement through processes that meet the highest ethical standards and promote <u>advocacy</u> including <u>political action</u> when appropriate.

Indicators:
1. Performs all professional responsibilities with integrity and fairness.

2. Models and adheres to a <u>professional code of ethics</u> and values.

3. Makes decisions within an ethical context while respecting the dignity of all.

4. Advocates to district and state-level decision-makers when educational, social or political changes are necessary to improve learning for students.

5. Makes decisions that are in the best interests of students and aligned with the vision of the school.

6. Considers legal, moral and ethical implications when making decisions.

7. Acts in accordance with federal and state constitutional provisions, <u>statutory standards</u> and <u>regulatory applications</u>.

Standard G: Diversity

An effective instructional leader responds to and influences the larger personal, political, social, economic, legal and cultural context in the classroom, school, and the local community while addressing <u>diverse student needs</u> to ensure the success of all students.

Indicators:
1. Develops and implements an appropriate diversity policy involving the school community and stakeholders which encompasses program planning and assessment efforts.

2. Recruits, hires and retains a diverse staff.

3. Interacts effectively with diverse individuals and groups using a variety of <u>interpersonal skills</u> in any given situation.

4. Recognizes and addresses cultural, learning and personal differences as a basis for academic decision making.

5. Leads the faculty in engaging families/parents in the education of their children.

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Tennessee Instructional Leadership Standards
Glossary of Terminology

Academic achievement: A measure of how well students are learning core concepts and curriculum as evidenced by standardized test scores, performance on classroom assessments, portfolios of student work, or another standards-based assessment tool.

Advocacy: The pursuit to influence decisions that affect students and educators directly and society as a whole indirectly; turning passive support into positive action for education.

Assessment: *See* FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION and SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION.

Best practices: Research based activities, ideas and strategies that provide a measurement of excellence to guide schools in achieving high standards. If practitioners reflect on and adopt best practice standards, they are aware of current research in educational domains and consistently apply the full benefits of their latest knowledge to their professional practice.

Change processes: A cyclical series of steps by which a school can realize change or improvement. A change cycle, includes but is not limited to, data analysis, problem clarification, implementation planning, benchmarking, assessment/evaluation strategies, and monitoring strategies.

Collaboration: A relationship between individuals or organizations that enables the participants to accomplish goals jointly more successfully than they could have separately. Collaboration is essential in order to deal with the increasingly complex education issues.

Community resources: The collection of community sites, health and social agencies, businesses, leaders, and institutions that may become partners in educational efforts. The community resources may be used as content experts, cooperative partners for curriculum, funding sources and other school enrichment purposes.

Continuous learning: Based on the idea that learning is a lifelong process continuous learning means that educators continually engage in ongoing professional development and self-assessment of beliefs and assumptions in order to improve teaching and learning.

Continuous school improvement: A systemic process focused on increasing student achievement; a dynamic, ongoing, cyclical process that incorporates

leadership, curriculum and instruction, culture and climate, and assessment. A school dedicated to continuous improvement gathers data, sets goals, implements a plan, and uses reflection and results to begin the cycle again.

Data: Formative and summative information on student learning, in both aggregated and disaggregated formats, gathered from standardized tests, district-made tests, student work samples, portfolios, and other sources that provides important input to the selection of school or district improvement goals, and focus for staff development efforts and teacher practice and student learning.

Data is also used at the classroom level as teachers gather evidence of improvements in student learning to determine the effects of their professional learning on their own students. Teacher-made tests, assignments, portfolios, and other evidence of student learning are used by teachers to assess whether staff development is having desired effects in their classrooms.

Disciplined learning environment: A school campus that is accessible, healthy, supportive, secure, safe for students and free of drugs, violence, and other negative disruptions.

Diverse student needs (diversity): A variety of differences, including but not limited to ethnicity, language, socioeconomic class, disabilities, culture, and gender, which must be considered to ensure that all students learn.

Ethics: The branch of philosophy concerned with standards by which human actions can be judged right or wrong; a system or theory of moral values or principles. In education, ethics may refer to the code of values that guides educators' own behavior in the school setting as well as their daily modeling, instruction, and interaction with students.

Equity: The goal of equity is to achieve a high-quality education for all students, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, disabilities, or special needs. Because needs are greater in some situations than others, equal treatment is not necessarily equitable.

Evaluate: Provides performance feedback based on personal knowledge that is founded on formal and informal observations, using a variety of supervisory and evaluative strategies.

Formative assessment/evaluation: Formative assessment/evaluation occurs during a program or unit of instruction and is used to assess the learner's development, growth or ongoing progress towards meeting a learning goal. Formative evaluation and assessment focus on the process of learning.

High quality professional development: Professional development for educators that

- reflects the best available research and practice in teaching, learning, and leadership;
- enables teachers to develop further experience in subject content, teaching strategies, uses of technologies, and other essential elements in teaching to high standards;
- promotes continuous inquiry and improvement embedded in the daily life of schools;
- follows a coherent long-term plan; and
- is evaluated ultimately on the basis of its impact on teacher effectiveness and student learning.

Interpersonal skills: Applying abilities that facilitate the process of interacting and working effectively, respectfully and productively with other people, especially those who hold differing views.

Leadership teams: A collaborative team made up of representatives from stakeholder groups that shares responsibilities for leading a school or district. Teams work together to identify problems, craft improvement plans, and reflect on school or district progress.

Literacy: The ability to read, write, communicate, and comprehend.

Mentor: A role model who offers professional support to another person. A mentor has knowledge and experience in an area and shares it with the person being mentored.

Mission: A concise statement of the unique, fundamental purpose of an organization and its programs. The mission describes the organization's "reason for being" and identifies the organization's purpose, service, priorities, and beneficiaries of services.

Numeracy: The ability to use numbers and mathematical concepts, solve quantitative problems in various contexts and comprehend the ways in which data are gathered and presented (including but not limited to graphs, diagrams, charts, and tables).

Organizational structure: The arrangement of the learning environment, which includes but is not limited to scheduling, staffing, funding, use of teams, use of time, governance and curriculum alignment.

Personal professional development: *See* HIGH QUALITY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT. The individual process of identifying personal goals for improvement and seeking out the tools and resources to meet those goals.

Political action: Action initiated or performed with the intent of influencing national, state, or local government.

Proactive responses: Action taken to identify and address an issue prior to its causing adverse effects for the organization.

Productive learning environment: A culture where teachers, students, and parents are all encouraged and empowered to have a voice and to assume leadership roles in the school community.

Professional code of ethics: A set of broad statements to guide ethical decision making and provide a framework for the ethical standards and principles that should govern the work of principals and other educators. *See* ETHICS.

Professional learning community: Colleagues who operate with a commitment to a model of continuous improvement and engages its members in improving their daily work to advance the achievement of school and district goals for student learning.

Program evaluation: The use of data and assessment results to reflect on the outcomes, both successes and failures, of the curriculum, educational programs and policies.

Qualitative data: Information gathered using methods adapted from anthropology and other social sciences, including systematic observation and interviews.

Quantitative data: Information gathered in a numerical format adapted from the traditional scientific method.

Research-based: Policies, practices, and/or decisions that are informed by scientific research and studies.

Resources: Funds and tools that may be used to support learning and collaboration**.**

Rigorous curriculum: A course of study that emphasizes critical thinking, problem solving, authentic tasks and authentic context, application of knowledge, and ongoing reflection and assessment. Rigorous curriculum teaches "big ideas" and concepts and results in self-directed learners.

School climate: School climate refers to the social and educational atmosphere of a school. While the term has been researched for many years, a sole definition has yet to be formulated. The elements that comprise a school's climate are extensive and may include: number of quality of interactions

between adults and students; students' and teachers' perception of their school environment; academic performance; feelings of safeness in the school; and feelings of trust and respect for students and teachers.

School community: Diverse groups and agencies working together to achieve the best educational outcomes for students. The school community can include but is not limited to students, school staff (teachers, administrators, and support staff), parents, and interested individuals and members of community organizations.

School culture: School culture can be described as the values, beliefs and stories of a school. School culture includes values, symbols, beliefs, and shared meanings of parents, students, teachers, and others conceived as a group or community. Culture governs what is of worth for this group and how members should think, feel, and behave. The make-up of culture includes a school's customs and traditions; historical accounts; stated and unstated understandings, habits, norms, and expectations; common meanings; and shared assumptions. The more understood, accepted, and cohesive the culture of a school, the better it is able to move in concert toward ideals it holds and objectives it wishes to pursue.

School-wide improvement plans: Also called comprehensive school reform, this term refers to a systemic approach to continuous school improvement. *See* CONTINUOUS SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT.

Student Progress: Evaluation focused on short-term learning objectives and authentic classroom assessment.

Summative Assessment/Evaluation: Summative assessment/evaluation occurs at the conclusion of a program or unit of instruction and is used to assess the learner's acquired skills and knowledge. Summative evaluation involves the gathering of information about the results of learning, and typically takes the form of a test or comprehensive project.

Supervise: To focus staff and students on performance standards and goals through frequent reference and use of performance reviews, classroom observations, discussions of curriculum and instructional strategies, and other formative interactions.

Stakeholders: All groups and individuals with a vested interest and a role in student achievement. Stakeholders in education include but are not limited to school boards, superintendents and district personnel, teachers, administrators, community members, families, students, and policymakers.

Standard operating procedures and routines: The accepted and generally prescribed ways of completing tasks that are routine and have known outcomes.

Statutory standards and regulatory applications: Mandated ways of behaving that are defined and authorized by state-enacted statutes, specifications that are intended to govern/control how the statutes are applied in practice, and regulations that guide the implementation of statute.

Strategic: Actions are those grounded in a long term plan designed to achieve a particular goal.

Vision: Based on the school's mission, represents clearly articulated statements of goals, principles, and expectations for the entire learning community. A vision becomes a guiding force when all educational decisions are based on its framework and goals.